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Dear Parents:

What kind of a parent would refuse to feed their child when they have the funds to pay for food but use those funds rather on entertainment or for their own personal wants? What would you say to those parents? If your child was a friend of one of these children would you give them something to sustain them or watch them go hungry?

Physical hunger is a reality we can readily see in bodily features that grow weaker with each passing day/week/month. We see commercials for different charitable organizations that beg for donations to make a difference, even pointing out how little it takes to nourish a child in a third world country.

We have a similar condition in Tinley Park and at St. George. Children are not being spiritually nourished by their parents and are starving for the word of God, communion with Jesus, and the wellspring of grace from the Holy Spirit that is readily available at our weekend Masses. It is not enough to send children for religious instruction once a week and not practice that faith.

Our children depend upon us as adults to nourish and nurture them spiritually. They depend upon our example to not only know rules and laws but how they are lived. If you do not pray each day nor attend Mass each week as a family, then you are spiritually starving your children and it will have severe consequences later in life. Deprivation of good food and medicine leads to weak bodies that can neither function well nor fight off diseases. God's grace available through practicing our faith with Sunday Mass, and receiving the sacraments regularly, including Reconciliation, strengthens a person to deal with the temptations of life and reach the fullness of what God intends for us—to be signs of his love in word and deed.

St. George parishioners, through their Sunday contributions, subsidize Catholic education both in our school and through Religious Education. Parents of our school children have already been notified that if they do not use their Sunday envelopes and support the church at least three of the four Sundays a month, they will be charged the tuition rate of non-contributing/non-participating members of St. George. This will also apply to Religious Education families. Failure to fulfill the Sunday requirement will result in families being charged the higher fee quarterly, which must be paid within two weeks of notification.

You are being notified that starting June 1, 2015 we will be recording your envelopes and your children's envelopes which are mailed to adults and given to children in September. If they do not fulfill the required 3 out of 4 Sundays each month, your tuition rate will be raised to the higher rate. Blank envelopes are available at the entrances of church and should be used by both parents and children attending Mass if you have forgotten your envelope. Only envelopes placed in the collection at the time of the Offertory will be counted. They cannot be turned in before or after Mass. If on vacation, a bulletin from the church where you attended Mass will suffice for this requirement.

My intention for this new emphasis on Sunday Mass is to bring families to a deeper understanding of what a faith life is all about. Parents are the first teachers of their children in the ways of faith. May you also be the best of teachers by what you say and do. I have given my life as a priest to make the gospel of Jesus Christ truly Good News. One hour of the 168 hours each week which God gives us life is not asking too much to set our children on a solid foundation for their future and to teach them to say "Thank You" to God. Eucharist is a Greek word that means "thanksgiving". I pray this will awaken the spiritual life in all our families, strengthen the bonds of true love in the family, and enrich our children on their journey to becoming adults and good Catholic leaders in the future.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Ken Fleck
Pastor